

Homework 1.1. Identifying Cultural Differences

Dealing with differences is much easier when you are aware of what they are. Look at the following chart and mark one of the two statements (either column A or B) that best describe the message you got from your family. Share your responses with your partner after completing the exercise and talk about the reasons behind each of your choices.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
Life is short; enjoy it while you can.	Never play until your work is done.
Success should not be pursued at the expenses of family ties.	The best way to serve yourself as well as your family is to be very successful.
Somebody has to have primary responsibility for the home and the family. It's almost always better if it's the woman.	Women have right to achieve as much as men. The division of labour should be gender-neutral and openly negotiated.
Modesty is noble; boastfulness is crude.	A person has a right to be openly proud of achievements.
Actions speak louder than words; talk is a waste of time.	You can best solve a problem by talking it through.
Words can be used for effect. Exaggeration is just a way to make the point.	Words are never to be wasted. They should be used carefully and precisely.
Marriage is between two families.	Marriage is between two people.
Anger is expressed by continued fighting and debating.	Anger should be avoided or discussed rationally and calmly.
Parents' authority is non-debatable.	All family rules can be negotiated by everyone.
Your problem is my problem.	Don't interfere in other's affairs.
Food is an expression of giving and love.	Food is for sustenance. Eat with moderation and never waste.
A little clutter just makes house look warm and lived in.	Cleanliness is next to godliness.
Drinking alcoholic beverages is a normal part of family life. Getting a little loose is a good release.	Alcohol should be used rarely and always in moderation.
Intense expression of emotion at a funeral is normal and expected. A large, long social gathering after the burial is important.	A funeral is a solemn and quiet affair. Open displays of emotion should be kept to a minimum and the service should be brief.
People are basically selfish and can't be trusted.	People are inherently good. If you treat them well, they will generally treat you well.
Men are impulsive creatures. You can't expect them to be totally monogamous.	If either partner has sex outside the relationship, it means the relationship is over.
Men and women can never be "just friends". There is always a sexual element to any close relationship between the sexes.	Close friendship between men and women is perfectly natural and acceptable. It doesn't have to have a sexual component.
Money is to be enjoyed.	Money is to be spent only when necessary. Save as much as possible for future needs.